

**Town of Fairhaven
Board of Public Works Meeting
January 24, 2022**

Present

Brian Wotton, Commissioner
Robert Hobson, Commissioner
Cameron Durant, Commissioner
Marcus Ferro, Commissioner
Steven Riley, Commissioner
Vincent Furtado, BPW Superintendent
Rebecca Vento, Office Manager
Jeffrey Furtado, Water Superintendent
Rene Robillard, Sewer Superintendent
Don Collasius, Tree Warden
Al Valle, Fairhaven Pickleball Association
Debra Almeida, Fairhaven Pickleball Association



I. Call to Order

Mr. Wotton called the meeting to order at 6:16 p.m.

II. Routine Matters

A. Signing of Departmental Bills

III. Approval of Minutes

A. January 10, 2022

Mr. Hobson motioned to approve the minutes of January 10, 2022. Mr. Ferro seconded. Vote unanimous.

IV. Appointments

A. Superintendents

1. FY23 Budgets

Mr. Robillard presented the Sewer Department Budget to the Board. Mr. J Furtado presented the Water Department Budget to the Board. Mr. V Furtado presented the BPW Administration Budget, Park Department Budget, Highway Department Budget and Sanitation Department Budget to the Board.

2. Capital Plans

Mr. V Furtado & Mr. Robillard presented the FY23 Sewer Department Capital Plans to the Board. Mr. J Furtado presented the FY23 Water Department Capital Plans to the Board. Mr. V Furtado presented the FY23 BPW Administration, Park Department and Highway Department Capital Plans to the Board.

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Mr. Riley - When was the last time the water towers were painted?

Mr. J Furtado – The Sconticut Neck Road Tower was painted in 2009 & the Boston Hill Road Tower was painted in 2013.

3. Articles

Mr. Furtado reviewed the FY23 Articles with the Board.

Discussion ensued amongst all present.

Mr. Furtado – We will have the Board vote on the Articles and Road Work at the next meeting.

B. Discussion with the Tree Warden

Mr. V Furtado –The Board wanted to invite you in and get your thoughts about putting in another Article at Town Meeting to make the Tree Warden Position an Appointed Position that would fall under the Board of Public Works after your term is up.

Mr. Hobson - When you ran for election this Board was under the assumption that you wanted to make the Tree Department better. I did read what you sent us and I was impressed. Are you in favor of the BPW taking over the Tree Department or are you in favor of leaving it the way that it is? When you were running for election, you said that you wanted to make the Tree Department part of the Park Department. Currently you control all of the equipment but when there is a storm the BPW is the one that gets the call. I believe that someday the Tree Department should fall under the BPW. What is your opinion on this?

Mr. Collasius – At this time I have not yet made up my mind on that. I would like to make an informed decision regarding that but first I have some questions for the Board. To be clear I did not support the last Article because I did not have enough information to make my decision. You are saying that you want the Tree Department to be part of the BPW and I see that as a conflict of interest in regards to protecting trees. My mandate as Tree Warden from the State is to protect, preserve and maintain the Urban tree canopy in the Town of Fairhaven.

Mr. Ferro - Can you explain that because it does not make sense to me. The BPW oversees the public infrastructure and natural assets like beaches and parks. Where does a tree come into play when it comes to removing a tree? It is either when a tree is obstructing or in the middle of the infrastructure or part of our natural assets. It does not seem like there would be a conflict of interest it seems that absorbing the Tree Department would be congruent with what we do at the BPW. Could you explain to me what your definition of conflict of interest is?

Mr. Collasius – Do you recall last October when you met with myself and Mr. Durant at Livesey Park?

Mr. Ferro – I do. That was very informative.

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Mr. Collasius – I then came to your Board for permission and acknowledgement that those trees were an issue and offered to help do something about it because those trees did not come under my jurisdiction. At that time, your Board was going to go to an outside source for a second opinion. Since that meeting, one of those trees fell and did damage to someone's property.

Mr. Wotton – The tree fell less than a week later.

Mr. Ferro – That does not seem like a conflict of interest that seems like an issue with departmental resources.

Mr. Collasius – No, it has to do with incompetency.

Mr. Ferro – During the last storm the BPW had to go out and clean up because the Tree Department could not handle it. I think that this is an insult to all of us for you to call us incompetent. I understand that you are trying to make the Tree Department better and I think that you have done a good job but to put us down and say that the BPW is not competent enough to take over the Tree Department if we were to get expended resources is offensive.

Mr. Collasius- I was not referring to the whole department as incompetent, I think that the Department does a great job. The competency issue lies with the Board. I came to your Board with a problem tree, you said that you would get back to me and never did and that tree fell and damaged someone's property. Getting back to the conflict of interest. It seems that trees are a problem for the BPW. They cause issues with sidewalks, curbs, streets, etc. It appears to me that your job would be easier if there were no trees and it appears to me that this Board is on an agenda to get rid of street trees. If you look at Bellevue Street and Brown Street there were numerous trees removed to repair the roads and sidewalks and they were never replaced. I have also have seen this other places as well.

Mr. Wotton – I am insulted that you said that the BPW wants to remove every street tree in town. If you are going to ask for help as you do on a daily basis the answer is going to be no because we are incompetent. We had to remove the trees to make the sidewalk ADA compliant per state regulations. You cannot replace a tree in a 2-foot area between a street and a sidewalk. Also, Bellevue Street and Brown Street are not complete.

Mr. Collasius – Every Town in the State does it and Fairhaven has done it for many years. Trees have a calming effect on drivers and they put a barrier between cars and pedestrian on the sidewalks that's why they need to be replaced.

Mr. Furtado - Whenever we spend State or Municipal money we have to make sidewalks ADA compliant. In the past when the previous Tree Wardens needed help, we would help them and the previous Tree Wardens helped us when we did total road reconstructions.

Mr. Riley – In your letter you are proposing a few full time employee. Assuming that the FY24 budget is approved and you have a fulltime arborist, a fulltime laborer and a full time Tree Warden would they be able to handle everything in the Town?

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Mr. Collasius - That is the plan.

Mr. Riley – So there will be no need for the Highway Department to help the Tree Department.

Mr. Collasius – I would need their help if there is a hurricane.

Mr. Riley - What you are saying is that the two departments have to cohesively join together?

Mr. Collasius – Yes, I think that they would have to work together. I work with Mr. Furtado and or Mr. Charbonneau almost on a daily basis. If you see in my letter we could take over trees in the parks, stump grinding, etc.

Mr. Riley – You mentioned that you, Mr. Furtado and Mr. Charbonneau converse daily.

Mr. Collasius – Quite frequently.

Mr. Riley – If the two departments are talking daily wouldn't it be better operationally if the two departments become one?

Mr. Durant - Many of the points are great and it highlights that there are agreements between the two departments. The only thing in your letter that I disagree with is how to structure the department and whom they would answer to. It make sense to me operationally that the Highway, Park and Tree Department all become one.

Mr. Collasius - I am not going to run again for the Tree Warden Position but I do want to improve the department before my term is done.

Mr. Wotton - You can be part of the solution or you can be part of the problem. Do you have any interest working with this Board to merge the two departments?

Mr. Collasius - I absolutely advocate to make the Tree Warden an appointed position but I do not believe that the Board of Public Works is the best solution.

C. Al Valle, Pickleball Courts at Livesey Park

Mr. Valle - We have been working with the Board and trying to keep everyone in tune with the proposal of adding six pickleball courts to Livesey Park. We went in front of the CPC for funding and they mentioned that no one is using the hockey rink and they would like the pickleball courts to go there. We are doing our due diligence and trying to find out if the hockey rink is still being used. While doing so we have found that there are many pickup games that take place there. We are still investigating to see how much the rink is actually being used and then we will report our findings to the CPC.

Mr. Wotton – Are they using the rink to play street hockey or roller hockey?

Mr. Valle - I have seen it used for both.

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Mr. Wotton – If we allow the pickleball courts to be put in the rink would the nets be able to be removed if someone wanted to use the hockey rink?

Mr. Valle – Yes, but I am not sure how that will work to fill the holes that the posts go into. I think there would be a lip. The next meeting for the CPC is February 16, 2022. We have a short window to gather all this information.

Mr. Wotton - Is there a way to merge the tennis and pickleball courts instead of the hockey rink?

Mr. Valle - We could but the tennis courts get a lot of use too. We are willing to do the work but I just want to make sure that this Board is ok with it.

Mr. Riley - I think that you should not put the pickleball courts in the rink. I think you should put the courts where you want them next to the tennis courts.

Mr. Valle - I understand. We are just trying to do our due diligence.

Mr. Wotton - We are in favor of the pickleball courts.

Mr. Valle - We are asking for more courts because with the membership we currently have we exceed the number of courts that we have in town.

Mr. Riley - I think these courts will get a tremendous amount of use just like the tennis courts.

Mr. Ferro - I agree. Having more recreational space is better and I do not want to see the rink taken away.

Mr. Wotton - What is the cost for the six courts?

Mr. Valle – The six courts will cost around \$240,000.

Mr. Durant - Are we concerned that the project is in jeopardy?

Mr. Valle –The CPC does not want to fund the project because it will be taking up more green space in the park.

Mr. Riley - What are the dimensions of the overall court design?

Mr. Valle – The courts are around 104' x 64'

Ms. Almeida - I know that the Police Chief advises that we do not take the rink down.

V. Item for Action

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A. Water Superintendent Vacation Carryover

Mr. J Furtado – I am looking to see if the Board will allow me to carryover five vacation days.

Mr. Ferro motioned to approve Mr. J Furtado's request to carryover five vacation days. Mr. Durant seconded. Vote unanimous.

B. Hart Engineering, West Island Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades, Change Order #3 \$ 204,200.00

Mr. Hobson exited the meeting at 8:59 p.m.

Mr. Ferro motioned to approve Hart Engineering Change Order #3 in the amount of \$204,200.00 for West Island Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades. Mr. Durant seconded. Vote 4-0-1 with Mr. Hobson not present.

Mr. Hobson returned to the meeting at 9:01 p.m.

C. Century Paving, Green Street Phase 3 Roadway Improvement Project, Payment # 4 Final Payment \$ 6,687.10

Mr. Durant exited the meeting at 9:02 p.m.

Mr. Hobson motioned to approve Century Paving Final Payment #4 in the amount of \$6,687.10 for Green Street Phase 3 Roadway Improvement Project. Mr. Ferro seconded. Vote 4-0-1 with Mr. Durant not present.

Mr. Durant returned to the meeting at 9:03 p.m.

D. Stantec Consulting Services, Town-Wide Sanitary Sewer Force Main Condition Assessment, Payment #10 \$30,287.03

Mr. Ferro exited the meeting at 9:04 p.m.

Mr. Riley motioned to approve Stantec Consulting Services, Payment #10 in the amount of \$30,287.03 for Town Wide Sanitary Sewer Force Main Condition Assessment. Mr. Durant seconded. Vote 4-0-1 with Mr. Ferro not present.

E. Hart Engineering, West Island Treatment Facility Upgrades, Payment #8 \$ 88,207.50

Mr. Hobson motioned to approve Hart Engineering Payment #8 in the amount of \$88,207.50.00 for West Island Wastewater Treatment Facility Upgrades. Mr. Durant seconded. Vote 4-0-1 with Mr. Ferro not present.

VI. Tabled Matter

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A. n/a

VII. Public Comments / Open Forum

VIII. Old Business / New Business

A. Superintendent

Superintendent Report for January 24, 2022

- Continue work with Labor Counsel on Union on grievance
- Complete BPW annual report
- Chair MRV Monthly Meeting
- Attend 2 capital planning meetings - present BPW projects
- Work on FY 23 articles with Becky
- Work on recycling grant
- Jeff and I attend water meter installation progress meeting
- Attend West Island TP construction update meeting with Rene
- Meet with Engineer re: Livesey Skatepark project update
- Rene and I meet with engineers re: sewer force main project update
- Bid documents for Causeway bridge water main repair were drafted
- Add Force Main repair work to FY 23 Budget
- Attend progress meeting with stormwater interns
- Meet with Mark Reese re: Selectmen Policy objectives update
- Al Valle - pickleball group - CPC has suggested we knock down Livesey Hockey Rink and replace it with courts to save greenspace - will be on agenda
- Work on MRV Budget Assessments

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B. Board Members

Mr. Ferro - I am the CPC Representative for the BPW and I have found it hard to represent the BPW because I have a lot of things that conflict with their meeting dates. My attendance has not been the best and I think it would be best if we could find someone else in the future.

C. Marine Resources Committee – BPW Related Matters

Mr. Hobson – The Marine Resources Committee has not met in January.

D. Town Administrators Screening Committee – BPW Representative

Mr. Durant - The consultant should be in front of the Select Board tonight presenting the top three candidates to them.

IX. Set Date for the Next Meeting

Mr. Ferro motioned to set the date for the next meeting on February 7, 2022 at 6:15 p.m. Mr. Hobson seconded. Vote unanimous.

X. Adjourn

Mr. Ferro motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:06 p.m. and enter into executive session to discuss Howard Farms – Dirty Water and to reconvene in open session. Mr. Durant seconded. Rollcall vote: Mr. Wotton, Mr. Durant, Mr. Ferro & Mr. Riley in favor. Motion passes 4-1 with Mr. Hobson opposed.

Mr. Durant motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:19 p.m. Mr. Ferro seconded. Vote unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca L. Vento

Rebecca Vento
Office Manager

Minutes approved on February 7, 2022